

**Floor Stripper**

Business Name:		ABN:	
Business Address:			
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:	

**THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU ON THIS PROJECT**

Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

**CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS**

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	

SAMPLE

RISK MATRIX									
LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION	HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS	
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE			<b>Elimination</b> Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	<b>Substitution</b> Replace the hazard.	
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Review before work starts.	Isolation Isolate People from the hazard	
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.	<b>Engineering</b> Isolate the hazard	
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	<b>Administrative</b> Change	
								<b>PPE</b>	

  

Risk Rating & Required Action:	
<b>4A</b>	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. Eliminate the hazard or redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or higher-level authorisation is required.
<b>3H</b>	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
<b>2M</b>	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
<b>1L</b>	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.

  

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
<b>Catastrophic</b>	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
<b>Major</b>	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
<b>Moderate</b>	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
<b>Minor</b>	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
<b>Insignificant</b>	No injury	no schedule impact	Deviation caught and corrected on site

  

**Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:**  
Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid:

1. **Eliminate**
2. **Substitute**
3. **Isolate**
4. **Engineering**
5. **Administrative**
6. **PPE**

Always document **why** a lower-order control is accepted if elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable.

*aligned with Safe Work Australia's Managing the risk of fatigue at work (2023) and ISO 45001:2018 clauses 6–8.*

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
1. WHS Governance, Legal Compliance and PCBU Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of documented WHS management system specific to floor covering removal and vinyl floor stripping / sealing operations</li> <li>Failure to identify and comply with the WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice (e.g. Hazardous Chemicals, Managing the Work Environment, Noise, Manual Tasks, Asbestos)</li> <li>Inadequate understanding of PCBU, officer and worker duties and due diligence obligations in relation to chemical use, noise, plant and subcontractor management</li> <li>Absence of documented risk management procedure for assessing new floor stripping products, equipment and methods before use</li> <li>Poor integration of WHS requirements into business planning, tenders and client contracts (e.g. unrealistic timeframes, insufficient allowance for ventilation or curing time)</li> <li>Insufficient consultation with workers and Health and Safety Representatives on changes to products, equipment and work methods</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, implement and regularly review a WHS management system aligned to WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Australian Standards with procedures specific to floor covering removal, vinyl floor stripping and sealing operations</li> <li>Establish a formal risk management procedure that requires a documented risk assessment and approval before introducing new stripping machines, chemicals, pads, sealers or work methods</li> <li>Maintain a legal register that identifies applicable WHS laws, regulations, Codes of Practice and Australian Standards relevant to hazardous chemicals, plant, noise, manual tasks and confined / poorly ventilated spaces</li> <li>Define and document WHS responsibilities for officers, managers, supervisors and workers, including due diligence duties and communicate these through position descriptions and induction</li> <li>Embed WHS requirements into contracts, tenders and job pricing so sufficient time and resources are allocated for safe stripping, removal, drying and sealing processes</li> <li>Implement a regular WHS governance review (e.g. annual) by senior management to check compliance, resource allocation and effectiveness of controls for floor stripping activities</li> <li>Establish formal consultation arrangements with workers and, where in place, Health and Safety Representatives, including toolbox talks on changes to chemicals, equipment or methods</li> <li>Maintain records of WHS decisions, risk assessments and consultation outcomes for transparency and evidence of due diligence</li> </ul>	Medium
2. Procurement and Selection of Chemicals, Plant and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selection of floor stripping machines, adhesive removers, sealers and cleaning agents with unnecessary toxicity, corrosivity or volatility</li> <li>Purchase of products without adequate Safety Data Sheets (SDS) or with SDS not compliant with Australian requirements</li> <li>Use of incompatible combinations of chemicals creating harmful vapours or residues</li> <li>Procurement of floor stripping machines, burnishers and vacuums that lack appropriate guarding, dust control,</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal procurement procedure that mandates WHS review and approval for all new chemicals, plant and equipment used in floor covering removal, stripping and sealing</li> <li>Require current Australian-compliant SDS for all chemicals prior to purchase, with WHS review of health hazards, PPE, storage, incompatibilities and disposal requirements</li> <li>Standardise on a vetted range of floor strippers, adhesive removers and sealers with lower hazard profiles where reasonably practicable, and prohibit high-risk legacy products (e.g. high VOC, highly corrosive, sensitising agents) unless justified by risk assessment</li> <li>Ensure plant and equipment meet relevant Australian Standards and are supplied with manufacturer instructions addressing safe use, maintenance, guarding and noise / vibration levels</li> <li>Specify wet-area-rated electrical equipment and RCD protection as minimum standards for powered tools used in stripping and sealing processes</li> </ul>	Medium

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	<p>noise reduction or vibration minimisation features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of equipment and extension leads not suitable for wet environments, increasing risk of electric shock during stripping and sealing</li> <li>• Selection of low-quality PPE that is not fit for purpose (e.g. gloves, respirators, eye protection) or not compatible with chemicals used</li> <li>• Failure to consider ease of maintenance, spare parts availability and service support when selecting machines</li> <li>• Buying low-odour or water-based products without checking actual exposure limits, application conditions and curing requirements</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult workers and supervisors when selecting new machines or products to ensure practicality, usability and WHS requirements are considered together</li> <li>• Ensure respiratory protection, gloves, eye and skin protection and footwear are selected based on SDS recommendations and, where possible, standardised across the business to simplify training and stock management</li> <li>• Include lifecycle considerations in procurement decisions, such as availability of dust extraction accessories, HEPA filters, noise dampening kits, service agreements with competent providers</li> </ul>	
3. Hazardous Chemicals and Substance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate identification and assessment of health risks associated with floor strippers, adhesive softeners, sealers, primers and cleaning chemicals</li> <li>• Lack of central chemical register specific to floor stripping and sealing products used across multiple sites</li> <li>• Improper decanting, labelling and storage of chemicals leading to unintentional exposure or incompatible mixing</li> <li>• Use of products in poorly ventilated areas (e.g. small rooms, corridors, retail tenancies after hours) causing build-up of vapours</li> <li>• Skin contact causing dermatitis or chemical burns due to failure to follow SDS controls</li> <li>• Inhalation of vapours or aerosols during application or machine operation where mechanical stripping agitates chemicals</li> <li>• Inadequate spill response systems for liquid strippers and sealers, leading to</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a current hazardous chemicals register covering all floor covering removal, stripping and sealing products, accessible to workers and updated whenever products change</li> <li>• Conduct and document task-based hazardous chemical risk assessments that consider ventilation, duration, frequency, application method and cumulative exposure for workers and others in the vicinity</li> <li>• Ensure SDS are available at head office and accessible electronically or on site, and that supervisors are trained to interpret and implement recommended controls</li> <li>• Implement a standard decanting and labelling procedure that prohibits decanting into unlabelled containers and ensures all secondary containers are clearly identified and hazard-labelled</li> <li>• Develop a ventilation guideline that prescribes when natural or mechanical ventilation is required, how air movement is to be achieved, and when work must cease due to odour or vapour build-up</li> <li>• Specify minimum PPE requirements for each product or process (e.g. chemical-resistant gloves, eye protection, coveralls, respirators) and verify they are consistent with SDS recommendations</li> <li>• Establish and train workers in a chemical spill response procedure, including immediate containment, notification, clean-up methods and waste disposal, with spill kits provided as standard equipment</li> <li>• Develop waste management procedures that define disposal methods for chemical containers, slurry, removed sealers and contaminated consumables, including liaison with licensed waste contractors where required</li> </ul>	Medium

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	<p>spreading, slip hazards and environmental contamination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improper disposal of waste slurry, contaminated pads, rags and containers contrary to environmental and WHS requirements</li> </ul>			
4. Asbestos and Hazardous Materials Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disturbance of asbestos-containing floor tiles, vinyl sheeting, backing or old adhesive residues during mechanical stripping or scraping</li> <li>• Failure to obtain or review the asbestos register for existing buildings prior to floor covering removal</li> <li>• Undocumented assumptions that no asbestos is present based purely on visual inspection or age estimates</li> <li>• Contamination of work areas, equipment, clothing and adjacent tenancies due to uncontrolled disturbance of asbestos-containing materials</li> <li>• Exposure of workers, trades, building occupants and the public to airborne fibres from hazardous materials in older floor coverings</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Low
5. Training, Competency and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers operating floor strippers, grinders, burnishers and systems without formal training or assessment of competency</li> <li>• Supervisors lacking specific knowledge of chemical hazards, ventilation requirements and machine limitations for different floor types</li> <li>• Inadequate instruction on reading SDS, following manufacturer instructions and applying site-specific risk controls</li> <li>• New or labour-hire workers not receiving appropriate induction before undertaking tasks involving hazardous chemicals and powered plant</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over-reliance on informal on-the-job learning leading to inconsistent and unsafe practices between crews and sites</li> <li>Insufficient supervision on remote or after-hours jobs where floor stripping and sealing is often scheduled</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
6. Planning, Scheduling and Job Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unrealistic timeframes leading to rushed work, short-cutting of risk controls and inadequate curing or drying times for sealers</li> <li>Job scheduling during trading hours or high-occupancy periods leading to increased exposure of the public and other workers to noise, fumes and slip hazards</li> <li>Inadequate pre-site planning for access, power supply, water, waste removal and ventilation requirements</li> <li>Insufficient consideration of adjacent work activities (e.g. other trades, cleaners, retail staff) resulting in overlapping hazards</li> <li>Worker fatigue due to extended shifts, night work or back-to-back jobs, particularly during peak project periods</li> <li>Assignment of complex or high-risk jobs to workers without the requisite skills or experience</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
7. Plant, Equipment and Maintenance Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure of floor strippers, grinders, burnishers and vacuums due to lack of preventative maintenance or inspection</li> <li>Electrical faults in powered equipment or extension leads used in wet stripping environments</li> <li>Defective or missing guards and covers exposing workers to moving parts</li> <li>Use of incorrect or excessively aggressive pads, blades or discs causing loss of control, flying debris or</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<p>damage to substrates that then require more hazardous remediation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate dust extraction or collection on machines leading to airborne particulates, including potential exposure to silica or other hazardous dusts where grinding is involved</li> <li>Unavailability of spare parts or backup equipment leading to pressure to use unsafe or improvised solutions</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
8. Contractor and Subcontractor Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of subcontractors for floor covering removal and vinyl stripping / sealing without verifying their WHS capability</li> <li>Inconsistent application of company WHS procedures by external crews, leading to variable control standards between sites</li> <li>Lack of clarity around PCBU responsibilities and coordination when multiple contractors operate simultaneously</li> <li>Inadequate communication of site-specific hazards (eg. ventilation constraints, building occupancy, asbestos status) to subcontractors</li> <li>Subcontractors supplying their own chemicals or equipment with higher risk profiles than the principal contractor standards</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
9. Work Environment, Public Safety and Site Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncontrolled public access to areas where stripping, sealing or drying is taking place, creating slip, trip and chemical exposure risks</li> <li>Insufficient signage and barricading around wet or recently stripped floors, especially in retail, healthcare and education environments</li> <li>Inadequate ventilation or climate control on site affecting drying times, odour build-up and worker comfort</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interaction with other trades and building occupants causing congestion and conflicting traffic flows</li> <li>Poor lighting conditions leading to misjudgement of wet areas, surface defects or obstacles</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
10. Manual Handling, Ergonomics and Work Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetitive bending, kneeling and twisting during floor covering removal and edge stripping leading to musculoskeletal disorders</li> <li>Handling of heavy or awkward rolls of vinyl, carpet, waste bags, chemical containers and equipment</li> <li>Prolonged operation of vibrating tools or machinery contributing to hand-arm vibration and fatigue</li> <li>Poor job design resulting in extended periods of work in sustained postures without adequate rest breaks</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
11. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Respiratory Protection Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over-reliance on PPE in lieu of other order controls for chemical exposure, noise and dust</li> <li>Incorrect selection, fitting or use of respiratory protection when using volatile strippers, sealers or mechanical equipment generating dust or aerosols</li> <li>Inadequate maintenance, cleaning and replacement of PPE leading to reduced effectiveness</li> <li>Worker non-compliance with PPE requirements due to discomfort, lack of availability or poor supervision</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

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12. Emergency Preparedness, First Aid and Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of preparedness for chemical splashes to eyes or skin during stripping and sealing activities</li> <li>Inadequate planning for fire or explosion risks associated with flammable or combustible products in confined areas</li> <li>Delayed response to slips, falls, acute health symptoms from vapours or sudden equipment failures</li> <li>Under-reporting of near misses and minor incidents, preventing learning and improvement</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
13. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controls for floor stripping and sealing becoming outdated as products, equipment and work practices change</li> <li>Failure to identify remaining issues, such as odour complaints, slip incidents or near misses related to ventilation and curing times</li> <li>Inadequate verification that risk controls (e.g. ventilation plans, chemical substitutions, PPE programs) are implemented as designed at multiple sites</li> <li>Workers becoming complacent or normalising unsafe conditions over time</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE – CALL 000 FOR EMERGENCIES**

Ensure to have an Emergency Management Plan in place as well as adequate numbers of trained first aid staff with easy access to fully stocked first aid kits, rescue equipment, material safety data sheets, adequate access to emergency communication equipment and fire-fighting equipment suitable for all classes of fire and ignition sources.

**LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES**

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE. DELETE THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES FOR ANY STATE THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE

**Queensland & Australian Capital Territory**

Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011  
 Legislation QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws>  
 Codes of Practice QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>  
 Legislation ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

**Victoria**

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004  
 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017  
 Legislation VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice>

**New South Wales**

Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2025  
 Legislation NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-codes-of-practice>

**Western Australia**

Work Health and Safety Act 2020  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022  
 Legislation Western Australia: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice WA: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/codes-practice>

**Northern Territory**

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulation 2011  
 Legislation NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws>  
 Codes of Practice NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

**Safe Work Australia Links**

Law and Regulation (All States): <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation>  
 Model Codes of Practice: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice>

**South Australia**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)  
 Legislation for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/resources/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/codes-of-practice#COPs>

**Model Codes of Practice**

- Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work
- Confined spaces
- Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Welding processes
- First aid in the workplace
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces
- Hazardous manual tasks
- Managing the risk of falls in housing construction
- Managing electrical risks in the workplace
- Demolition work
- Excavation work
- Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Managing the work environment and facilities
- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace
- Construction work

**Tasmania**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012  
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2012  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012  
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional) Regulations 2012  
 Legislation for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Details of permits, licenses or access required by regulatory bodies (add or delete as required):

- Permits from local council
- Authorisation to commence work
- Any required documents.